

Message Text

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ACTION EA-13

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 14124

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652 GDS
TAGS: PINT, MILI, VS
SUBJECT: MR I CEASEFIRE AND POLITICAL WEEKLY OVERVIEW FOR
PERIOD JULY 29 - AUGUST 4, 1973

FOLLOWING MSG FROM AMCONSUL DANANG ON AUG 4 ACTION EMBASSY
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C O N F I D E N T I A L DANANG 988

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, MILI, VS
SUBJ: MR I CEASEFIRE AND POLITICAL WEEKLY OVERVIEW FOR
PERIOD JULY 29 - AUGUST 4, 1973

SUMMARY: MILITARY ACTIVITY IN QUANG NGAI HAS INTENSIFIED AND
SOME EXTENDED ACTION NORTH OF THE HAI VAN PASS HAS OCCURRED.
IN QUANG NGAI GVN CLEARING OPERATIONS ARE ENCOUNTERING
STIFFER RESISTANCE, ALTHOUGH ONLY BY LOCAL VC UNITS. DANANG
RICE PRICES DECLINED TOWARDS THEIR LEVEL PRIOR TO THE MID-
JULY PRICE SPURT. THE PRG ARE ESTABLISHING A "PEACE DIS-
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TRICT" IN QUANG NAM WITH CONSIDERABLE HOUSING, ROAD BUILDING

AND A LARGE GROUP OF MEDICAL TRAINEES. IN AN ISOLATED INCIDENT A SMALL GROUP OF REFUGEES SAILED FOR HOME IN PRG-OCCUPIED QUANG TRI.

1. SECURITY SITUATION:

A. THE LEVEL OF MILITARY ACTIVITY WAS GENERALLY LOW AND CEASEFIRE VIOLATIONS REPORTED AT I CORPS HEADQUARTERS AVERAGED 8 PER DAY. FOR THE FIRST TIME IN SEVERAL WEEKS AN EXTENDED SERIES OF ENGAGEMENTS OCCURRED NORTH OF THE HAI VAN PASS AND GVN ARTILLERY FIRED OVER 1,000 ROUNDS IN FOUR DAYS IN THE AREA OF OPERATION OF THE 3D REGIMENT, 1ST ARVN DIVISION ABOUT 20 KILOMETERS WEST OF HUE. NVA GUNNERS WERE ALSO ACTIVE AGAINST THE ISOLATED REGIONAL FORCES OUTPOST AT BACH MA. AS YET THERE IS NO INDICATION, HOWEVER, THAT THIS RENEWED PRG/NVA ACTIVITY IN THUA THIEN IS ANYTHING MORE THAN A "REMINDER THAT THEIR FORCES ARE STILL AROUND", AS ONE SENIOR GVN OFFICER HAS PUT IT.

B. IN QUANG NGAI, HOWEVER, THE CLEARING OPERATIONS OF GVN FORCES, PRIMARILY EAST OF NATIONAL HIGHWAY 1 AND IN WESTERN SON TINH DISTRICT, CONTINUE TO BRING MORE INTENSIFIED COMBAT AND STIFFER ENEMY RESISTANCE, ALTHOUGH ONLY LOCAL VC UNITS ARE ENGAGING. NVA MAIN FORCE UNITS ARE AVOIDING CONTACT AND, ACCORDING TO GVN INTELLIGENCE SOURCES, ARE THE SUBJECT OF CRITICISM BY INDIGENOUS VC FOR FAILURE TO SUPPORT HARD-PRESSED LOCAL COMRADES. AT THE SAME TIME, GVN INTELLIGENCE CONTINUES TO REPORT THAT CONSIDERABLE NUMBERS OF REPLACEMENTS IN VC PROVINCE UNITS IN MR I ARE IN FACT NVA PERSONNEL. THEY REPORTEDLY CONSTITUTE A MAJORITY OF THE EFFECTIVES IN MOST VC QUANG TIN PROVINCE UNITS, FOR EXAMPLE.

2. DANANG PRICES STABILIZED:

REVERSING ITS SHARP RECENT CLIMB, THE PRICE OF RICE HAS FALLEN IN DANANG. DELTA RICE NOW SELLS AT 11,800 PIASTERS AND U.S. LONG RICE AT 13,700 PIASTERS PER 100 KILO BAG (A DROP OF 12.6 PERCENT AND 17 PERCENT RESPECTIVELY FROM THE JULY 19 PRICE AT THE PEAK OF POPULAR CONCERN OVER PRICES AND SUPPLIES).

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3. PRG BUILDING ACTIVITIES IN THE WESTERN REGION:

THE PRG HAS DESIGNATED AN AREA IN WESTERN CENTRAL QUANG NAM PROVINCE AS "PEACE DISTRICT" AND CONTINUES TO BUILD UP THE NECESSARY INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT MODEST COMMUNITIES IN THE CAI RIVER VALLEY. AT BEN GIANG (YC 975365) LARGE NUMBERS OF NORTH VIETNAMESE STUDENTS ARE REPORTEDLY IN MEDICAL TRAINING AND AT THANH MY (ZC 0344) SEVEN RESIDENTIAL BARRACKS

NOW EXIST CAPABLE OF HOUSING SOME HUNDRED PERSONS EACH. ALONG THE BOUNG RIVER ABOUT SEVEN KILOMETERS NORTH OF THANH MY IS MORE SCATTERED HOUSING. BRANCHING OFF THE MAIN PRG NORTH-SOUTH MR I ARTERY FROM BEN GIANG IS A ROCK REINFORCED ROAD ALONG OLD NATIONAL ROUTE 14 NORTHEAST TOWARD GVN THUONG DUC DISTRICT TOWN. ANOTHER ROAD EAST FROM THANH MY ALONG ZC COORDINATE 42 HAS BEEN COMPLETED THROUGH SEVERAL KILOMETERS TOWARD GVN DUC DUC DISTRICT. REPORTS FROM GVN THUONG DUC INDICATE THAT QUARRYING EXPLOSIONS FOR PAVING ROCK CAN BE HEARD AT NIGHT AND THE DUST CLOUDS OF CONSTRUCTION CAN BE SEEN FROM HIGH POINTS DURING THE DAY.

4. INCIDENT OF REFUGEES RETURNING TO PRG:

SOME 100 PERSONS FROM A REFUGEE CAMP NEAR HUE RETURNED BY BOAT TO THEIR HOME DISTRICT IN GIO LINH IN THE PRG OCCUPIED PART OF QUANG TRI. ONLY ONE OTHER MINOR EXPEDITION OF SUCH A NATURE HAS BEEN ATTEMPTED TO OUR KNOWLEDGE. AT THIS TIME WE VIEW THE INCIDENTS AS ISOLATED OCCURRENCES WHICH ARE NOT YET A CAUSE FOR ALARM.

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